

**CITY OF NORWALK
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; James Frayer; Bryan Meek; Barbara Smyth; Darlene Young; Lisa Shanahan (7:30 p.m.)

STAFF: Anna Breault, Special Events Coordinator; Sabrina Godeski, Director of Business Development and Tourism; Steven Kleppin, Director of Planning and Zoning; James Travers, Director of Transportation, Mobility and Parking; Jessica Vonashek, Chief of Economic and Community Development

OTHERS: Brian Kasper, Cultural Arts Commission Chair; Annica Lydenberg, You are Not Alone

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll as indicated above.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present who wished to comment.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of the Minutes of July 6, 2023, Meeting.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**
**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. MEEK)**

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. REDEVELOPMENT

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO ADVANCE THE PY47 CAPER TO THE COMMON COUNCIL WITH AUTHORIZATION FOR THE MAYOR TO SIGN ALL FORWARDING DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED BY HUD.**

Mr. Kleppin explained that they are reporting on the third year. This report summarizes their accomplishments and how much they have spent.

Mr. Frayer said the report was very comprehensive and Mr. Kydes thanked all involved for their hard work.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. PLANNING AND ZONING

1. Zoning Update, including Waterfront Study.

Mr. Kleppin presented slides dated September 7, 2023. He explained that the Zoning Commission has been meeting every Wednesday to review the plan. He noted they have scaled back the upzoning. They referred the Plan out and are waiting for comments. The Harbor Management Commission submitted a memo with concerns entered around adding density along the waterfront. They did not look favorably on the recommendations made by the Economic and Community Development Committee. A public hearing will take place in about two weeks and Mr. Kleppin said he anticipates a robust discussion.

Mr. Kleppin gave an update on the CIRCA Resilience Study and the Affordable Housing Plan. He explained that some major projects include North 7, Phase 1, Monroe Street, the Pinnacle at 370 West Avenue (the former YMCA site) and 15-17 Chestnut Street.

Mr. Kleppin described the 370 West Avenue site and said it would include 204 units. He presented the site plans and a rendering of what the buildings will look like.

The 15-17 Chestnut Street development will include 204 units along with a generous court yard. Mr. Kleppin presented a rendering of the development.

All application materials are on the Planning and Zoning page. Mr. Kleppin explained that anything associated with Zoning regulations have their own page.

In response to Ms. Young's question, Mr. Kleppin said there will be a total of 512 units once all the phases are completed. Ms. Young expressed concern about traffic patterns. Mr. Kleppin said the City is actively engaging with the developer on one way flow and on-street parking. Mr. Young stressed that people have to come out to see the traffic. She added that she hoped the community would be engaged in the process.

Mr. Travers said they just got the study back and asked Ms. Young if they could discuss how best to engage the community. She said it is helpful to know how many apartments are being built and would appreciate that data. Mr. Kleppin said he could provide that information.

Mr. Kydes said that regardless of the study, there will be an increase in traffic. Ms. Smyth asked if the townhouses will be included in the 10% affordable units. Mr. Kleppin explained that the requirement is 10% of the units. They have to be dispersed evenly within the development.

Mr. Kydes talked about the concerns that were raised about changing zoning from one family to two family. Mr. Kleppin said that has been reduced quite a bit. Mr. Kydes asked if East Norwalk has been removed from the new regulation and Mr. Kleppin said that 80-90% of the proposal has been removed.

Ms. Shanahan joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Frayer asked if there were any more applications coming in for apartment developments. Mr. Kleppin said that the only one that has been approved is on Glover Avenue. He added that Webster Street may be developed. Mr. Kleppin said there is a lot of interest in Norwalk by developers.

Mr. Frayer asked if all of the units were rental. Mr. Kleppin said they are all rental units. Mr. Kydes added that banks are not lending for condominiums.

Mr. Meek noted that the Waypoint Development commercial space has not been rented out after eight years. He asked about the forecast for filling this capacity, now that they are putting more traffic in the area. Mr. Kleppin said they are very cognizant about the commercial space. They no longer require ground floor commercial space because the likelihood of it filling up is slim.

C. TRANSPORTATION, MOBILITY, AND PARKING

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH TRI-STATE LED FOR \$36,217.40 TO UPGRADE THE ELECTRICAL FIXTURES IN THE ISLAND ADJACENT TO MARITIME AQUARIUM.
ACCT: 510000 5796 GGP08 & 0923 3710 5777 C0773**

Mr. Travers explained that they were notified the lights have been out and determined they were under Parks and Recreation, but not maintained by Parks and Recreation. He said they need to be replaced and will be dark sky compliant. The bid presented is the lowest bid and the contractor will paint all the poles black. He said they are Parks and Recreation fixtures and will be maintained by Parks and Recreation. Sixteen fixtures will be replaced and will match the style located throughout SoNo.

Mr. Meek left the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE CDM SMITH AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE AN ADDITIONAL \$27,150 FOR THE HAMILTON AVE STAIRCASE.**

ACCT: 520000-5796-MLK01

Mr. Travers explained that this project will be funded out of the MLK Grant. The new design was checked by a consultant. The estimated cost for the project is \$420,000.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

D. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH YOU ARE NOT ALONE MURALS, PURPOSE PROJECTS NY, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000 TO INSTALL A MURAL LOCATED ON BRIEN MCMAHON HIGH SCHOOL AS APPROVED BY NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION.**

ACCT: 0922 3760 5777 C0804 & 0923 5777 C0804

Mr. Kasper explained that this is a purpose driven project. He shared his screen and described the project that started in 2019 in Brooklyn, NY. They are a public art project that inspires artists to create work in their communities.

Ms. Lydenberg described the proposal for Brien McMahon High School and presented the mural. The budget reflects the event and the mural. They have plans for a second mural.

Ms. Smyth asked if the artists will engage with the students as to how they work and if so, how. Ms. Lydenberg said they would love to facilitate speaking to the students about the project. They definitely want to work with the high school to be sure people understand the story. Ms. Smyth asked if they are working with the Principal. Ms. Godeski said they are working with the Principal to see how they can fit it into the curriculum. Mr. Frayer noted the City paid a couple of hundred thousand dollars for mental health and made a big investment this year. He said it is important to maximize the efforts on both sides. Ms. Godeski said they only had one conversation with the Principal and the hope is for general mental health awareness. Ms. Young said that depending upon how successful this is, they may want to start in the middle schools, because this has no age limit. She agreed that they need to make a concerted effort to maximize the funds.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH ARC SOUND. STAGE LIGHTING. LLC TO INSTALL AND PRODUCE STAGES AND LIGHTING AND SECURE ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE CITY OF NORWALK NIGHTFAIR ON WASHINGTON HALLOWEEN EVENT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$75,000 VIA SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT. ACCT: 133710 5796 AEC16 & 0924 3780 5777 C0680**

Ms. Breault described the event that will take place on Saturday and Sunday. She said that ARC has done many events in Norwalk and is a one stop shop vendor. They also provide staffing for the event.

Ms. Young said this sounds like a pretty big bill. Ms. Breault said this is not a lot for this business. She added that they wanted something bid for Norwalk. Ms. Young asked about traffic. Ms. Breault said they will close Washington Street to the Harbor and part of North Main Street. Ms. Young said they need to find a mechanism for informing the residents in South Norwalk. She suggested they could get a calendar of events together.

Ms. Vonashek said this price is comparable to what they paid last year for the holiday event. She said that Ms. Breault has been doing really good work since she arrived and she and Ms. Godeski have been collecting ideas from residents. She said they can send a calendar with events.

Ms. Smyth welcomed Ms. Breault and said that ARC does great work. Ms. Breault said people are asking for live music. She said they are looking for vendors for this event and for the holiday event. They are also looking for sponsors.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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III. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services